

Shifting Consumer Attitude in the E-Commerce Era: An Application of the 4Es Marketing Framework

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Abstract:

This study examines the shifting consumer attitude in the age of e-commerce with special reference to the 4Es framework of marketing practices—Experience, Everyplace, Exchange, and Evangelism. Based on secondary data from Indian studies indexed on Google Scholar, Shodhganga, research journal and article from various reputed sources. The research analyzes how the 4Es influence consumer perception, trust, behavioral intention, agreement, motivation, and interest. The findings indicate that experiential quality, accessibility, value exchange, and digital advocacy collectively shape consumer attitudes in the Indian e-commerce context. The study confirms the relevance of the 4Es framework in explaining contemporary consumer behavior and provides insights for customer-centric marketing strategies.

Keywords:

Consumer Attitude, E-commerce, 4Es Framework

Introduction

The rapid expansion of e-commerce in India has brought a significant shift in consumer attitudes, moving beyond traditional product and price considerations toward experience-oriented and value-driven decision making. Indian studies have consistently highlighted that factors such as website usability, convenience, delivery efficiency, and post-purchase services strongly influence online buying attitudes. (Bhattacharya, 2024) found that e-service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, and ease of navigation play a crucial role in enhancing customer satisfaction and repurchase intention, emphasizing the importance of experience in the digital marketplace.

Similarly, (Elango, 2016) reported that perceived usefulness, enjoyment, and security significantly shape consumers' attitudes toward online shopping in the Indian context. From a regulatory perspective, (Chawla, 2021) argued that strengthened consumer protection laws and e-commerce regulations in India have enhanced consumer trust and reduced perceived risk, thereby positively influencing the exchange value of online transactions. Further (Hemamalini, 2013) observed that accessibility, convenience, and product availability across platforms influence consumer attitudes differently across product categories, reinforcing the relevance of everyplace in e-commerce adoption.

In addition, (Rana, 2022) highlighted that online reviews, digital promotions, and customer advocacy significantly contribute to brand equity and loyalty, indicating the growing importance of evangelism in shaping consumer attitudes. Overall, Indian literature clearly demonstrates a shift in consumer attitude toward e-commerce, where experiential value, perceived fairness, ubiquitous access, and peer influence dominate decision making, making the 4Es framework of marketing practices a relevant and contemporary approach for studying consumer attitudes in the Indian e-commerce environment.

Objectives of the study

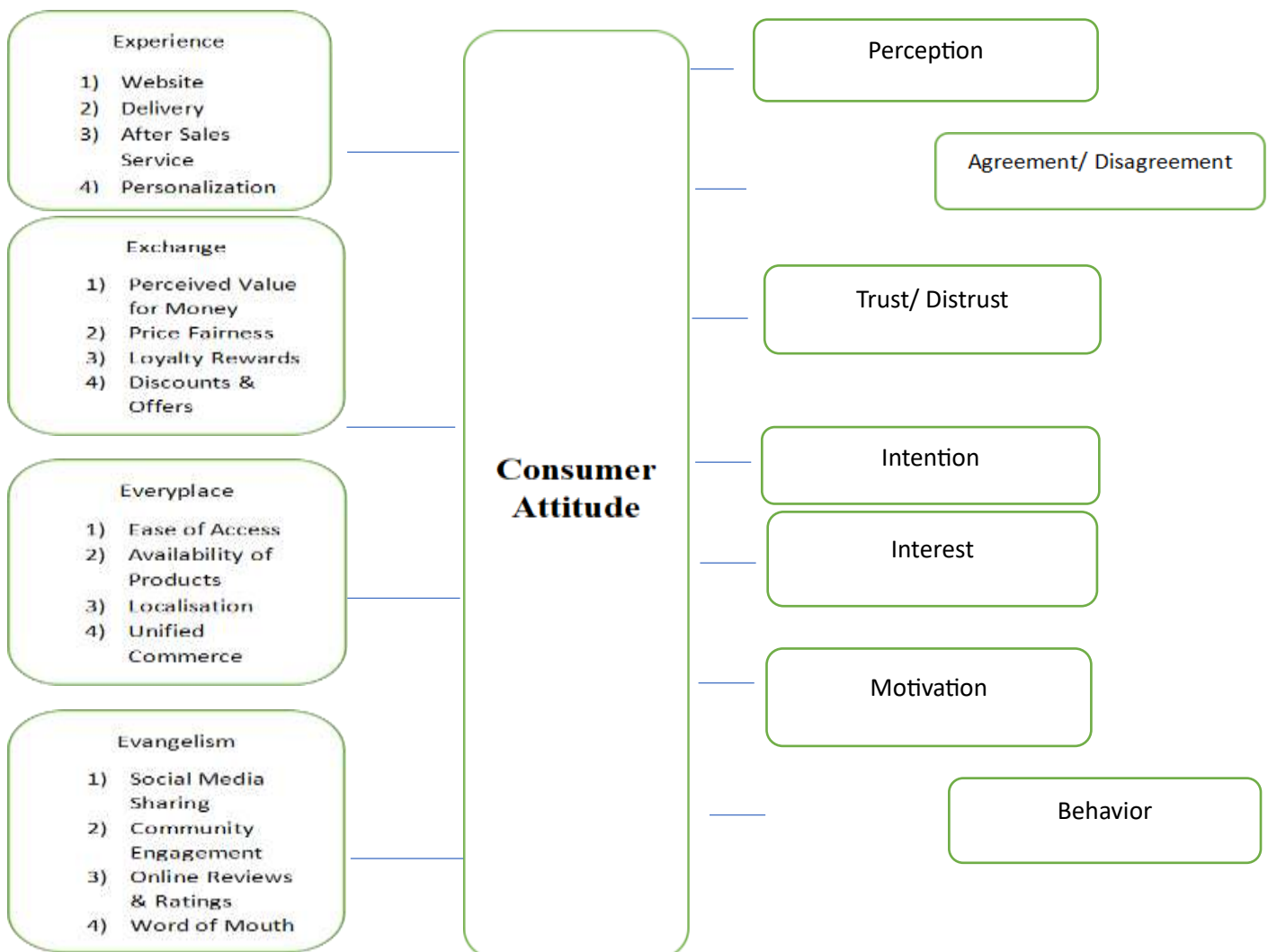
1. To study how online shopping experience and consumer evangelism influence consumer attitude in e-commerce.
2. To examine the influence of ease of access (Everyplace) and value exchange on consumer decision-making and behavior in e-commerce.

Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the shifting consumer attitude in the age of e-commerce, with special reference to the 4Es framework of marketing practices (Experience, Exchange, Everyplace, and Evangelism). The study is entirely based on secondary data, which has been collected from credible and authoritative sources such as research articles published by Indian authors, journals indexed in Google Scholar, reports of government bodies (such as the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Consumer Affairs), industry reports from reputed consulting firms, and published data from e-commerce platforms and trade associations. Relevant literature was identified using keywords like consumer attitude, e-commerce in India, 4Es marketing

framework, and digital consumer behavior. The collected data were systematically reviewed, classified, and analyzed using thematic and content analysis to identify patterns, trends, and relationships related to each element of the 4Es framework. Comparative analysis was also employed to synthesize findings across studies and time periods in order to understand the evolving nature of consumer attitudes in the Indian e-commerce context. The study does not involve primary data collection; hence, its conclusions are limited to the scope and reliability of existing published data. However, the use of multiple secondary sources enhances the validity and comprehensiveness of the findings.

Conceptual Framework of 4Es on Consumer Attitude



(fig 1:- conceptual model developed by researcher)

Experience

Indian literature highlights experience as a critical determinant of consumer attitude in e-commerce, encompassing website quality, delivery performance, after-sales service, and personalization. Studies by (Bhattacharya, 2018) and (Saha & Zhao, Y. , 2019) found that website usability, visual appeal, and information accuracy significantly influence customer satisfaction and trust among Indian online shoppers. Delivery-related research by (Mishra & Singh, R. K., 2016) and (Kumar, Anand, N., & Ramanathan, R. , 2017) revealed that timely and accurate delivery, especially last-mile efficiency, strongly affects customer experience and repurchase intention in the Indian context. Further, (Verma & Sharma, D, 2018) emphasized that effective after-sales service, including complaint resolution and return policies, enhances customer confidence and brand perception. Additionally (Gupta & Arora, N. , 2020) observed that personalization through tailored recommendations and customized communication improves perceived value and emotional attachment, thereby strengthening overall consumer experience. Collectively, Indian studies confirm that experiential factors significantly shape perception, trust, and behavioral intention in e-commerce.

Exchange

Indian research identifies exchange-related factors such as perceived value for money, price fairness, loyalty rewards, and discounts as major drivers of consumer attitude in e-commerce. (Chaudhuri & Ligas, M., 2017) found that perceived value for money significantly enhances satisfaction and repeat purchase intention among Indian consumers. (Srivastava & Kaul, D. , 2019) demonstrated that transparent and fair pricing practices strengthen consumer trust and reduce price-related skepticism. Loyalty rewards and incentive programs were shown by (Kumar & Shah, D., 2018) to positively influence customer retention and long-term engagement in Indian online retail. Additionally (Bansal & Gupta, G., 2020) concluded that discounts and promotional offers strongly motivate purchase behavior, particularly among price-sensitive Indian consumers. Overall, exchange elements play a vital role in shaping behavioral intention and agreement toward e-commerce platforms

Everyplace

The concept of everyplace in Indian e-commerce literature focuses on ease of access, product availability, localization, and unified commerce. (Shankar & Datta, B., 2018) found that mobile accessibility and platform convenience significantly enhance consumer engagement, particularly in India's mobile-first market. Studies by (Sarkar & Khare, A., 2017) highlighted that wide product availability and real-time inventory visibility positively influence purchase decisions among Indian consumers. Localization has also gained importance, with (Dwivedi, Rana, N. P., Tamilmani, K., & Raman, R. , 2020) noting that vernacular language support and region-specific content improve inclusivity and trust. Furthermore (Ghosh & Varshney, S, 2019) emphasized that unified commerce—integrating online and offline channels—creates seamless shopping experiences, thereby positively influencing consumer attitude. These findings indicate that ubiquitous access and channel integration are essential in shaping favorable consumer perceptions in India.

Evangelism

Evangelism-related factors such as social media sharing, community engagement, online reviews, and word-of-mouth have gained prominence in influencing consumer attitudes in India. (Sharma & Verma, H. V. , 2018) found that social media interactions and content sharing significantly affect brand credibility and consumer perception. (Singh & Sinha, N. , 2020) observed that active community engagement on digital platforms fosters trust and emotional connection with brands. Online reviews and ratings were identified by (Parkash & Gupta, S. , 2020) as strong predictors of purchase intention, as Indian consumers heavily rely on peer opinions. Further, (Mehta & Saxena, K. , 2021) concluded that positive electronic word-of-mouth enhances motivation and interest, while negative reviews deter purchase decisions. These studies collectively suggest that evangelism acts as a powerful social influence mechanism shaping trust, perception, and behavioral intention in Indian e-commerce.

Consumer Attitude

Consumer attitude in e-commerce reflects consumers' overall evaluation of online shopping platforms based on perception, trust or distrust, behavioral intention, agreement, motivation, and interest. Indian studies indicate that positive consumer perception regarding usefulness, convenience, and value significantly

enhances favorable attitudes toward online shopping (Kumar & Pansari, A. , 2016). Trust has been identified as a crucial determinant, as higher trust levels increase purchase intention, while distrust discourages online transactions (Chakraborty & Soodan, V., 2019). Further, (Pandey & Chawla, D. , 2018) found that motivation and agreement with price benefits and service policies positively influence consumers' behavioral intention in India. Additionally, (Gupta & Arora, N., Customer engagement in mobile shopping apps: The role of personalization and perceived value, 2020) highlighted that sustained interest and engagement strengthen positive attitudes and long-term acceptance of e-commerce platforms. Overall, Indian literature confirms that consumer attitude is a multidimensional construct that plays a decisive role in shaping online purchase behavior.

Perception

Indian studies indicate that consumer perception plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes toward e-commerce platforms. (Kumar & Pansari, A. , 2016) found that perceived usefulness, convenience, and overall platform image significantly influence favorable perceptions among Indian online shoppers. Similarly, (Chakraborty, 2017) observed that perceived website credibility and information quality positively affect consumer perception, leading to higher acceptance of e-commerce. Further, (Verma & Singh, R., 2018) reported that perceived ease of use and promotional attractiveness enhance positive perception and engagement in Indian e-retailing. These studies suggest that perception acts as the cognitive foundation of consumer attitude in the Indian e-commerce environment.

Agreement / Disagreement

Indian research suggests that consumer agreement or disagreement toward e-commerce offerings shapes overall attitude formation. (Khare & Rakesh, S. , 2017) found that agreement with pricing policies, return options, and service promises positively influences acceptance of online shopping. In contrast, (Sinha & Verma, P. , 2019) reported that unmet expectations and policy ambiguities lead to disagreement and resistance among Indian consumers. (Chaudhuri & Kaul, D., Role of transparency and communication in shaping consumer agreement in online retailing., 2018) further emphasized that clarity and transparency in

communication enhance consumer agreement and reduce skepticism. Thus, agreement serves as an evaluative response influencing attitude strength.

Trust / Distrust

Trust has been widely recognized as a key determinant of consumer attitude in Indian e-commerce research. (Chakraborty & Soodan, V. , 2019) demonstrated that trust significantly mediates the relationship between website quality and purchase intention, while distrust discourages online transactions. (Gupta & Dubey, A. , 2016) found that secure payment systems, transparent policies, and reliable delivery enhance consumer trust in Indian online platforms. Additionally, (Sharma & Aggarwal, A. , 2020) concluded that consistent positive experiences reduce perceived risk and distrust, thereby strengthening long-term trust. Overall, Indian literature confirms that trust is central to sustaining positive consumer attitudes in e-commerce.

Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intention reflects consumers' willingness to engage in online purchasing and continued usage (Verma, Sharma, D, & Sheth, J. , 2016) found that perceived value and satisfaction strongly influence purchase and repurchase intentions among Indian consumers. (Pandey & Chawla, D., 2018) observed that convenience, price benefits, and service reliability significantly predict behavioral intention in Indian e-commerce. Further, (Singh & Srivastava, S. , 2019) highlighted that trust and perceived usefulness jointly enhance consumers' intention to shop online. These findings indicate that behavioral intention is a direct outcome of positive cognitive and affective evaluations.

Interest

Interest reflects consumers' curiosity and sustained attention toward online shopping platforms. (Kumar & Joseph, J. , 2017) found that innovative features, interactive interfaces, and product variety generate consumer interest in Indian e-commerce. (Gupta & Arora, N. , 2020) observed that personalization and relevant content significantly enhance consumer interest and browsing behavior. Further, (Sharma & Verma, H. V., 2021) concluded that continuous engagement through digital communication and updates sustains consumer interest and strengthens favorable attitudes. Thus, interest plays a supportive role in maintaining long-term consumer engagement.

Motivation

Motivation has been identified as a significant psychological driver of consumer attitude in India's e-commerce context. (Bansal & Goyal, M. , 2018) found that convenience, discounts, and time-saving benefits strongly motivate Indian consumers to adopt online shopping. Similarly, (Shukla & Sharma, S. K., 2019) observed that personalized offers and promotional incentives increase consumer motivation and engagement. (Mehta & Dixit, G, 2020) concluded that motivated consumers exhibit stronger emotional attachment and positive attitudes toward online platforms. These studies highlight motivation as an important antecedent of favorable consumer attitudes.

Findings

The findings of the study indicate that the 4Es framework—Experience, Everyplace, Exchange, and Evangelism—significantly influences consumer attitude in the Indian e-commerce context. Experience-related factors such as website quality, delivery efficiency, after-sales service, and personalization strongly shape consumer perception, trust, and behavioral intention. Everyplace dimensions enhance ease of access, availability, and convenience, thereby increasing consumer interest and positive perception. Exchange elements, including value for money, price fairness, loyalty rewards, and discounts, play a critical role in motivating consumers and gaining agreement, especially in a price-sensitive market. Evangelism factors such as online reviews, social media engagement, and word-of-mouth substantially affect trust and purchase intention. Overall, the findings confirm that consumer attitude—comprising perception, trust, behavioral intention, agreement, motivation, and interest—is collectively shaped by the integrated influence of the 4Es framework.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that the shifting consumer attitude in the age of e-commerce can be effectively explained through the 4Es framework of marketing practices—Experience, Everyplace, Exchange, and Evangelism, as proposed in the research model. The review of Indian literature clearly indicates that Experience-related factors such as website quality, delivery efficiency, after-sales service, and personalization play a decisive role in shaping consumer

perception, trust, and behavioral intention. Everyplace dimensions, including ease of access, product availability, localization, and unified commerce, enhance convenience and inclusivity, thereby strengthening consumer interest and favorable perceptions toward e-commerce platforms. Further, the Exchange elements—perceived value for money, price fairness, loyalty rewards, and discounts—significantly influence consumer agreement, motivation, and purchase intention, especially in the price-sensitive Indian market. Additionally, Evangelism factors such as social media sharing, online reviews, community engagement, and word-of-mouth emerge as powerful social influence mechanisms that shape trust, motivation, and interest, ultimately affecting consumer behavioral intention.

Overall, the model demonstrates that the combined influence of the 4Es directly impacts key consumer attitude components, namely perception, trust or distrust, behavioral intention, agreement or disagreement, motivation, and interest. The study reinforces the relevance of the 4Es framework in understanding contemporary Indian e-commerce behavior and provides a holistic perspective for marketers and researchers to design customer-centric strategies that foster positive consumer attitudes and sustained engagement.

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